

I oppose loosening the rules designed to promote and protect diversity of media ownership. These rules were adopted to ensure that the public would receive a diverse range of viewpoints from the media, and not simply the opinions of a handful of media conglomerates.

In an era where we are more intensively connected to the rest of the world than ever before, the media are spending less time on important international affairs, narrowing the range of source and opinions heard from.

News is produced as a commodity, as entertainment, rather than as a public good, a fundamental function of maintaining a democracy.

As the media are owned by larger and larger conglomerates, they lose all connection with communities and their needs - their essential constituency becomes only the stockholders.

Despite alternative forums (and whether the number has actually increased would require asking whether websites haven't just replaced pamphleteering), it is the mass media in broadcast and print forms that still dominate national information delivery and debate. Protecting diversity of ownership and diversity of interests and voices in these media is essential to democracy.

This is not merely a minor technical issue. This proposed rule change demands public hearings around the country and an extended period for consideration and comment.